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TAGS: ELAB, PINT, DA

SUBJECT: SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY LOSES MONOPOLY ON TRADE UNION
CAMPAIGN CONTRIBUTIONS

SUMMARY. A DECISION OF CONSIDERABLE POLITICAL CONSEQUENCES
WAS TAKEN AT THE CONGRESS OF DENMARK'S AND SCANDINAVIA'S LARGEST
TRADE UNION THE DANISH GENERAL AND SPECIAL WORKERS UNION(DASF)
SEPT 9-18. IN COPENHAGEN. ALTHOUGH THE DANAISH TRADE UNION MOVEMENT
HAS PREVIOUSLY GIVEN ITS SUBSTANTIAL CAMPAIGN CONTRIBUTIONS
ONLY TO THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY (SDP) THE DASF CONGRESS
VOTED TO DISTRIBUTE ITS CONTRIBUTIONS IN THE FUTURE TO THE
SCIALIST PEOPLES PARTY (SF) AND THE COMMUNIST PARTY (DK)
AS WELL AS TO THE SDP. END SUMMARY

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1. THE CONGRESS OF THE DASF DENMARK'S LARGEST UNION WITH 250,000 MEMBERS, HAD BEEN EXPECTED TO DEVELOP INTO AN OPEN CONFRONTATION BETWEEN TWO BLOCS. THE FIRST IS THE TRADITIONAL CONSERVATIVE SOCIAL-DEMOCRATIC BLOC REPRESENTED BY THE UNION'S PRESIDENT EILER SONDER AND VICE-PRESIDENT ERIK BORDING. THE SECOND IS MADE UP OF THE TWO MORE RADICAL FACTIONS WITHIN THE UNION, THE LEFT-WING SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC AND SOCIALIST PEOPLES PARTY (SF) GROUP AND THE SUBSTANTIAL COMMUNIST GROUP. OF THE 686 DELEGATES IN ATTENDANCE, AN ESTIMATED 90 WERE SF MEMBERS AND 100 WERE COMMUNISTS. HOW LARGE THE LEFT-WING SOCIAL-DEMOCRATIC GROUP MIGHT BE WAS THUS THE CRITICAL UNKNOWN. THE ANTICIPATED CONFRONTATION HOWEVER DID NOT DEVELOP. THIS SURPRISING AND ENCOURAGING OUTCOME APPEARS TO HAVE BEEN DUE IN PART TO THE EFFECT OF GROWING UNEMPLOYMENT--WHICH HAS MADE THE LABOR MOVEMENT MORE CONSERVATIVE-- AND IN PART TO THE DIRECT PUBLIC ATTACK WHICH THE CENTRAL DANISH TRADE UNION FEDERATION (LO) HAS UNLEASHED AGAINST THE COMMUNISTS WITHIN THE LABOR MOVEMENT AND ESPECIALLY AGAINST ITS ACTION GROUP. THE SO-CALLED "CHAIRMAN'S INITIATIVE" COMMITTEE

2. TO THE EXTENT THAT A FACTIONAL CONFRONTATION DID OCCUR, IT TOOK PLACE OVER THE ELECTION OF VICE-PRESIDENT AND ANTI-AMERICAN INFORMATION SECRETARY, CHALLENGED THE INCUMBENT BORDING. THE SOCIAL DEMOCRAT MOLGAARD WAS SUPPORTED BY THE LEFT-WING SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC GROUP (EVENTUALLY NEARLY 200 SIGNED HIS NOMINATION PETITION) AND WAS EXPECTED TO HAVE SF AND COMMUNIST SUPPORT AS WELL. MOLGAARD WITHDREW HIS CANDIDACY, HOWEVER, WHEN IT BECAME CLEAR THE THE COMMUNISTS WOULD NOT SUPPORT HIM (COMMENT- ACCORDING TO ONE EMBASSY SOURCE THIS WAS DUE TO THE COMMUNISTS'S LONG-RANGE TACTICAL PLANS: THEY HOPE TO ELECT A COMMUNIST VICE-CHAIRMAN IN 1977 AND BELIEVE THAT MOLGAARD WOULD BE UNBEATABLE IF HE WOULD HAVE THEN HAD THREE YEARS IN THAT POST) FOLLOWING HIS WITHDRAWAL SONDER AND BORDING THEN WERE REELECTED WITHOUT OPPOSITION

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3. THE POTENTIALLY MOST SIGNIFICANT DECISION TAKEN BY THE CONGRESS WAS THE RESOLUTION ADOPTED BY A TWO-THIRDS MAJORITY THAT FUTURE CAMPAIGN CONTRIBUTIONS SHOULD BE DISTRIBUTED TO THE THREE SO-CALLED "LABOR PARTIES" IN DENMARK, THE SDP, THE SF AND THE DANISH COMMUNIST PARTY (DKP) IN PROPORTION TO THE NUMBER OF SEATS EACH PARTY HOLDS IN PARLIAMENT. THIS HAS LONG BEEN A MAJOR OBJECTIVE OF THE SF AND DKP AND IT COULD WELL PROVE PRECEDENT

SETTLING FOR MANY OTHER UNIONS (THE PAINTERS UNION MEETING CONCURRENTLY IN COPENHAGEN ADOPTED A SIMILAR RESOLUTION; ON THE OTHER HAND THE BRICKLAYERS ALSO IN SESSION AT THIS TIME VOTED THE PROPOSAL DOWN) LABOR UNION CONTRIBUTIONS ARE SUBSTANTIAL. IN 1973-74 THE SASF ALONE CONTRIBUTED 750 THOUSAND KRONER (125 THOUSAND DOLLARS) TO THE SPD. IN THE FUTURE ONE QUARTER OF THIS WILL NOW FLOW TO SF AND DKP. AN LO SPOKESMAN INFORMED LABATT THAT THERE IS LITTLE THE LO CAN DO IN THE CIRCUMSTANCES TO DEFEND THE TRADITION THAT THE TRADE UNION MOVEMENT IS REPRESENTED POLITICALLY SOLELY BY THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY. PRACTICALLY, HOWEVER, THE RESOLUTION CAN BE CIRCUMVENTED, HE CLAIMED BY DIMINISHING THE TRADE UNION CONTRIBUTIONS FOR CAMPAIGN PURPOSES AND INCREASING OTHER FORMS OF INDIRECT SUPPORT TO SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC CAUSES.

4. A BIT OF DRAMA WAS ADDED TO THE PROCEEDINGS BY KURT JOHANSEN, A LOCAL TRADE UNION LEADER FROM THE WAREHOUSE AND COMMERCIAL WORKERS, WHO ANNOUNCED THE FORMATION OF A NEW POLITICAL ACTION ORGANIZATION "ACTIVE SOCIAL DEMOCRATS" WHICH WOULD SEEK TO COUNTER THE COMMUNIST LED ACTION COMMITTEE, THE "CHAIRMAN'S INITIATIVE". JOHANSEN CLAIMED THAT HIS ORGANIZATION WAS SUPPORTED BY 300 COPENHAGEN SHOP STEWARDS AND UNION LEADERS. ERIK HANSEN A REPRESENTATIVE OF THE CHAIRMAN'S INITIATIVE AND THE COMMUNIST SHIEF SHOP STEWARD AT THE BURMEISTER AND WAIN SHIPYARDS, DEFENSIVELY RESPONDED THAT HIS ORGANIZATION DID NOT SEEK TO SPLIT THE TRADE UNION MOVEMENT BUT MERELY TO STIMULATE INCREASED EFFORTS ON BEHALF OF THE RANK AND FILE.

5. IN OTHER ACTIONS, THE CONGRESS VOTED TO CHANGE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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ITS NAME TO THE SPEICAL WORKERS UNION IN DENMARK(SID) AND EXPRESSED ITS CONTINUING OPPOSITION TO DANAISH MEMBERSHIP IN THE COMMON MARKET. THE UNION REJECTED A PROPOSAL, HOWEVER, TO CONDEMN DENMARKS EC MEMBERSHIP, CALLING INSTEAD FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A COMMISSION TO RE-EVALUATE THE TOTAL EFFECT OF EC MEMBERSHIP ON DANISH ECONOMIC LIFE.

6. COMMENT: THE SASF CONGRESS WAS ON BALANCE MORE MODERATE THAN COULD HAVE BEEN EXPECTED IN VIEW OF FACT THAT UNDER ANKER JORGENSEN'S CHAIRMANSHIP IT WAS REGARDED AS DENMARK'S MOST LEFT-LEANING UNION. ON THE OTHER HAND, THE DECISION TO DIVIDE CAMPAIGN CONTRIBUTIONS IN THE FUTURE IS A SERIOUS SET-BACK FOR THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC LEADERSHIP OF THE DANISH TRADE UNION MOVEMENT.

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